

Nineteenth Street Baptist Church
19th and I Streets (Demolished 1975)
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-357

HABS
DC,
WASH,
499-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA		COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY WASHINGTON
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) NINETEENTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH			HABS NO. DC-357
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE			
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 19th and I street (DEMOLISHED)			
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1871		ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The first Black Baptist Church in the District of Columbia.			
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Romanesque Revival			
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Pressed brick			
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Three bay front with entrance bay flanked by mansard towers, two stories.			
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Gable roof, low rear tower at northwest corner, side bays separated by buttresses, arched windows with brick hoods on second floor, stained glass, round window in central gable, mansard towers with chamfered corners.			
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) Auditorium on first floor, sanctuary above.			
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Remodeled in 1917 Demolished August 1975			
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Demolished			
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE The history of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church is very important to the Black church movement in the District of Columbia. Like the black congregations of the Methodists, the members of the Baptist church established a separate institution in the first half of the 19th century. The establishment of the Nineteenth Street Church took place at a time of great discord between Blacks and Whites in Washington in the 1830's. (cont'd page two)			
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Demolition decision by the Joint Committee on Landmarks of the National Capital, 9/29/74. Schwartz, Nancy. District of Columbia Catalog, Historic American Buildings Survey, University of Virginia Press, 1974, p.105.			
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Eleni Silverman, Architectural Historian, HABS			DATE July 1984

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE (CONT'D):

The First Baptist Church (White), established in 1802 at 19th and Eye Streets, N.W., was originally a very egalitarian church. As membership increased, the church moved in 1833 to a new, larger church at a site presently occupied by Ford's Theatre. As the political tensions between Blacks and Whites increased in the 1830's, the Black members of the church were no longer allowed to worship with the Whites but were segregated into galleries. The Black members, dissatisfied, tried to establish a separate Black church at the Nineteenth Street location, but this request was denied. However, Elder Sampson White, a Black man who was not a member of the District of Columbia First Baptist Church, was able to obtain recognition from the Philadelphia Baptist Association, and was thus able to establish the first Black Baptist Church in the District of Columbia. The church membership increased steadily, and, by the close of the Civil War, the congregation numbered over a thousand persons. A new church was built and dedicated in 1871, and has continued to this day to be an influential church in the Black community.

The church has also played a significant role in the education of many black students in the District of Columbia. The Sunday School, founded in 1836, was a popular means of instructing many Blacks to read. In the 1850's a school was founded by Annie E. Washington and Mirtilla Miner which educated a great many Black students. In 1864 the Association of Volunteer Teachers of the District of Columbia held night classes at the church. Two other educational institutions associated with the church were the "Boston School" founded by the New England Freedman's Aid Commission which existed from 1864-1866, and the Wayland Normal School which lasted from 1866-1870.